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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 000463

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: JONATHAN MOYO ON ZANU-PF TURMOIL

REF: A) HARARE 448 B) HARARE 326

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher Dell under Section 1.4 b/d

Summary

[11](#). (C) Former Information Minister and Presidential Spokesman Jonathan Moyo told poleconchief May 24 that President Robert Mugabe continues to face internal ZANU-PF opposition, primarily from the Mujuru faction, both in the GOZ cabinet and in the provinces. There is also a split within Mugabe's inner circle as to whether to call an Extraordinary Congress later this year. Acknowledging past false hopes that Mugabe would be forced to leave office, Moyo argued that a constellation of factors*economic collapse, internal opposition, the SADC-Mbeki initiative, and the president,s age and declining health*truly imperil Mugabe,s attempt to cling to office. End Summary.

Opposition in Cabinet and the Central Committee

[12](#). (C) Moyo recalled that the March 30 ZANU-PF Central Committee meeting members had agreed to harmonize parliamentary and presidential elections in 2010 and had rushed through an endorsement of Mugabe as the party's presidential candidate. The Central Committee also backed an increase in the size of Parliament, selection of Senators based on proportional representation (an effort by Mugabe, according to Moyo, to increase his patronage), and election of a new president by the ruling party's parliamentary members in the event of the incumbent president dying,

becoming incapacitated, or leaving office. (Ref B)

13. (C) At a subsequent Cabinet meeting to consider the Central Committee's actions, Moyo said that the Mujuru faction, in indirect opposition to Mugabe, objected to both the proportional Senate representation and presidential election recommendations as undemocratic and unfair. Mugabe, engaging in what Moyo termed the "Stalinist fiction of the supremacy of the party," responded that the cabinet was subordinate to the Central Committee, and the Committees decisions should stand. He was unable to impose his will on the Cabinet and the matters were referred back to the Central Committee.

14. (C) At an extraordinary session of the Central Committee on May 4, according to Moyo, members agreed to direct Senate elections vice selection based on proportional representation but were unable to reach a decision on the selection of a replacement president. Moyo commented that the inability of Mugabe to get the issues agreed upon at the March 30 Central Committee to Parliament for approval was a clear sign of erosion of support for the president.

An Extraordinary ZANU-PF Congress This Year?

15. (C) Because of less than solid support for Mugabe and because endorsement of Mugabe was rushed through the Central Committee on March 30, Moyo said ZANU-PF Commissar Elliot Manyika had publicly proposed an Extraordinary Congress later this year to bolster support for Mugabe and endorse him for

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president. Yet even within Mugabe's inner circle there was opposition, principally from Minister of State Security Didymus Mutasa. Moyo thought Mutasa was piqued at not having been consulted, hence his opposition. Whatever the reason, he opined, there were fissures even among those close to Mugabe.

Trouble in the Provinces

16. (C) Moyo said that in preparation for an Extraordinary Congress, Manyika had planned to elect new ZANU-PF executive committees in several provinces. As we reported (Ref A), Mugabe loyalists were defeated in Masvingo and were unable even to stage an election in Bulawayo. Moyo added that within the last couple of weeks, they had also been defeated in Mashonaland East. He predicted the same result if elections took place soon, as planned in Manicaland. Moyo stated these provincial elections have demonstrated the Mujuru faction is still strong and capable of effectively opposing Mugabe. Moyo, an erstwhile Emmerson Mnangagwa ally, also thought that by Mnangagwa had tactically erred by supporting Mugabe; as Mugabe had become weaker, so had Mnangagwa.

A Third Force Still Possible

17. (C) Referring to an earlier discussion with the Ambassador (Ref B), Moyo said strategic discussions were still ongoing regarding an outside candidate such as Gideon Gono, Strive Masiyawa, or Simba Makoni. Moyo said the most likely scenario for the emergence of such a candidate would involve a ZANU-PF split, probably precipitated by opposition of the Mujuru faction. For the moment, he, Gono, and the others, would await developments.

The End of Mugabe

18. (C) Moyo noted the difficulty of predicting Zimbabwean politics. He also acknowledged wrong predictions over the last several years that the Mugabe era was near its end. Nevertheless, he argued that there is an historic convergence of events that make the case for Mugabe's exit in the near term: 1) Mugabe was rebuffed in his efforts to extend his term until 2010*the kind of rebuke that had never occurred before; 2) the disputes within ZANU-PF have become public, evidencing Mugabe's inability to maintain party solidarity; 3) Mugabe is 83 years old and incapable of maintaining his legendary control on the party and individuals around him; and 4) inflation is spiraling out of control, the economy is crashing, and the GOZ and Mugabe have no plan for economic recovery. Moyo also believed the Mbeki-SADC initiative was creating pressures. Whereas Mugabe first trumpeted the initiative as an African response, claiming at the same time that U.S. and European pressure represented inappropriate efforts at regime change, Mbeki has been in fact, albeit quietly, challenging Mugabe and his efforts to remain in power.

Comment

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19. (C) Moyo, a former cabinet minister and ally of Mugabe, is now an opponent and his views should be read in that light. Nevertheless, he maintains good contacts within the GOZ and ruling party, and his renditions of events have proved accurate in the past. He is also a shrewd analyst. As he acknowledges, predictions are just that, but his opinions are certainly worthy of consideration as he retains excellent contacts within the senior ranks of ZANU-PF.

DELL